

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00113 141711Z
ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0113

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK
SUBJ: RHODESIA: NKOMO PROPOSES NAIROBI MEETING JANUARY 26

1. JOSHUA NKOMO CAME TO THE RESIDENCE AT HIS REQUEST
JANUARY 14. HE SUGGESTED A MEETING BETWEEN OWEN-YOUNG AND THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT IN NAIROBI BEGINNING JANUARY 26. NKOMO
EMPHASIZED THAT FINAL AGREEMENT ON VENUE AND DATE HAD NOT
REPEAT NOT YET BEEN REACHED WITH MUGABE, BUT THEY HAD DISCUSSED
THE MATTER AND NKOMO FELT IT WOULD BE FORMALLY PROPOSED. HE
ASKED ME TO PASS ON THIS SUGGESTION INFORMALLY TO THE BRITISH.
ONCE AGREEMENT IS REACHED, THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER IN
MAPUTO WILL BE INFORMED; IN THE MEANTIME HE ASKED THAT THERE
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BE NO PUBLIC COMMENT.

2. NKOMO, WHO WAS MORE SUBDUED THAN USUAL, SAID HE HAD SUGGESTED
MEETING IN LONDON, LUSAKA, OR NAIROBI, BUT MUGABE PREFERRED NOT
TO LEAVE AFRICA. NAIROBI WAS FELT TO BE THE MOST REASONABLE
SPOT. NKOMO SAID HE WAS NOT SURE WHAT THE BRITISH WANTED, BUT
A MEETING IN NAIROBI WOULD BE USEFUL "TO DISCUSS WHAT WE CAN

DISCUSS." I SAID I HOPED THE MEETING COULD MAKE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PROGRESS IN DISCUSSING THE ISSUES, AND NKOMO REPLIED THAT IF IT WORKED OUT THAT WAY HE MIGHT BE PREPARED TO REMAIN THROUGH THE 29TH.

3. I TOLD NKOMO I THOUGHT WE HAD COME A LONG WAY SINCE LAST MAY. THERE NOW SEEMED TO BE BROAD AGREEMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF TURNING OVER POWER TO THE MAJORITY. WE HAD TO ARRANGE THE PEACE. THERE SEEMED TO BE A GENERAL DESIRE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MOMENT, AND WE SHOULD NOT LET THIS OPPORTUNITY SLIP. WE MUST, HOWEVER, HAVE SOME MOVEMENT. NKOMO REPLIED THAT IT ALSO MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT WHILE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WANTS "THIS THING TO END AND END QUICKLY," THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE HAVE SUFFERED GREATLY AND "WE WON'T TAKE JUST ANYTHING."

4. NKOMO ALSO BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF US ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE UNHCR FOR THE SCHOOL COMPLEX CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION OUTSIDE LUSAKA FOR ZAPU-SUPPORTED REFUGEE CHILDREN. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SITUATION WAS INCREASINGLY SERIOUS BECAUSE OF THE ONSET OF THE RAINY SEASON AND SHELTER WAS NEEDED URGENTLY. I TOLD HIM THAT I HOPED I COULD GET A REPLY TO HIM SOON. HE INVITED ME TO VISIT THE SCHOOL SITE WITH HIM BUT I WAS NON-COMMITTAL. WE ARRANGED TO GET TOGETHER AFTER MY RETURN FROM LONDON AND HIS RETURN FROM MAPUTO (HE SAID HE WAS LEAVING THIS EVENING AND PLANNED TO RETURN TO LUSAKA JANUARY 19).

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